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Comets

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Comets

Author Bio

Ericka Gardner '22 is a Political Science major and a writing minor. She has held an internship position as a writer for the Gettysburg College Communications and Marketing Department. In her free time, Ericka enjoys reading fiction and expressing her creativity through writing, though you can also find her trying a new recipe.

Comets

ERICKA GARDNER

I was saved from a sinking ship
over coffee. The ice from my cup
sent shivers down my spine like
wind breaking through a poorly insulated jacket.
Caffeine jitters weaned in your presence,
woodchips crunched beneath our feet, and
the slick rubber of swings seated us. Our eyes
met, uncertain. Do you see the bright yellow star in the sky?
That's Venus. Now, look at the moon not yet full, but
red and beautiful and bloody.

I was in awe of your knowledge and
of the sky so different from my home
where light becomes a blanket that stifles the stars.
In the warmth of your laughter, I gained the courage
to throw in the towel, to peel back the blanket suffocating me.
I was ready to end the endless cycle of
hot tears burning my cheeks and
forgiveness that weighs
like a grudge. As the moon waxes and wanes, I let go
of what I wanted to hold on to and
what I thought wanted to hold on to me all the same.

Neither of us, in that moment, planned the fate we fell into,
heavy and weightless at the same time.
Do you see those three stars all in a row?

That's Orion's Belt.
See that cluster there? The Seven Sisters?
Next is the Big Dipper. Then, a large coffee cup
overflowing with smiles wider than the ocean that is
filled with conversations we have yet to dive deep
and discover. Desire pulses red the way Mars looks from Earth.
A shooting star flashes and fades, and I think

of how quickly love can fizzle and burn itself away.
We started out with different people,
two comets flying through the galaxy, happy to collide
and forming something new.